

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 010610
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PGOV, PEPR, CY, TU

SUBJECT: NIMETZ BRIEFING TO CYPRUS AMBASSADOR ON ECEVIT-
WALDHEIM TALKS

1. AT DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTION, CYPRUS AMBASSADOR DIMITRIOU
CALLED ON COUNSELOR NIMETZ JANUARY 13 TO DISCUSS JANUARY 9
ECEVIT-WALDHEIM DISCUSSIONS ON CYPRUS. NIMETZ NOTED AT THE
OUTSET THAT AS YET WE HAD RECEIVED NO DIRECT READING FROM
WALDHEIM'S PARTY; HOWEVER, FROM CONVERSATIONS WE HAD HAD
WITH TURKISH REPRESENTATIVES IT APPEARED TO US THAT THE
PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE BY ECEVIT AND WALDHEIM SUBSEQUENT TO
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 010610

THEIR MEETING DID REFLECT QUITE ACCURATELY WHAT HAD BEEN
SAID IN PRIVATE. THESE STATEMENTS WERE HENCE WORTHY OF
CLOSE ATTENTION.

2. NIMETZ CONVEYED TO DIMITRIOU OUR GENERAL IMPRESSION
THAT THE TALKS HAD GONE VERY WELL; THAT ECEVIT GENUINELY DE-
SIRED A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT FOR ITS OWN SAKE; AND THAT HE WAS

APPROACHING THIS TASK IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER (SIGNIFICANTLY THERE HAD BEEN NO MENTION IN RECENT DAYS OF CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS SUCH AS FAMAGUSTA.) ECEVIT HAD APPARENTLY MANAGED TO PERSUADE WALDHEIM THAT HE VIEWED CYPRUS AS A HIGH-PRIORITY ISSUE AND THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO TAKE INITIATIVES IN THE NEAR FUTURE -- PROBABLY TO INCLUDE CONCRETE

CONSTITUTIONAL AND TERRITORIAL PROPOSALS. NIMETZ ACKNOWLEDGED THAT AS YET WE HAD NO INFORMATION AS TO HOW SPECIFIC THESE PROPOSALS MIGHT BE AND HOW DIFFERENT FROM ONES ADVANCED EARLIER; BUT IT WAS OUR CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT ECEVIT HAD FRESH MOVES AND APPROACHES IN MIND. IT WAS ALL THE MORE ENCOURAGING THAT DEMIREL, IN HIS SEPARATE MEETING WITH WALDHEIM, HAD VOICED SUPPORT FOR A FORTHCOMING TURKISH POSITION ON CYPRUS.

3. CONTINUING, NIMETZ NOTED THAT ECEVIT AND WALDHEIM HAD AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF A RAPID RESUMPTION OF INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS, PERHAPS AS EARLY AS FEBRUARY. IF THE GOT HAD INDEED BEEN ABLE TO GIVE THE SECRETARY GENERAL THE ASSURANCES THAT HE FEELS HE NEEDS, THEN WE WOULD CERTAINLY LEND WHATEVER SUPPORT WE COULD. NIMETZ TOOK NOTE OF THE IMPORTANCE THAT ECEVIT HAD ATTACHED TO GREEK AND TURKISH INVOLVEMENT IN THE QUEST FOR A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT; HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT ECEVIT HAD NOT SPECIFICALLY CALLED FOR DIRECT GREEK AND TURKISH PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 010610

NEGOTIATIONS -- AS CAGLAYANGIL HAD SEEMED TO FAVOR IN THE PAST -- AND HAD NOT INSISTED ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF BOTH ATHENS AND ANKARA AS PRECONDITION FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS. NIMETZ NOTED FURTHER THAT ECEVIT'S STATEMENT THAT HE DID NOT REGARD THE U.S. TO BE A DIRECT PARTICIPANT WAS FULLY IN CONSONANCE WITH OUR OWN PERCEPTION OF OUR ROLE. THIS WE ENVISAGED AS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF ENCOURAGING THE PARTIES TO MOVE AHEAD AND OF TENDERING ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE WHEN REQUESTED. WITH RESPECT TO ECEVIT'S GENERAL REMARKS ON GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, NIMETZ VOICED THE BELIEF THAT THE TURKISH PRIME MINISTER HAD NOT ESTABLISHED A LINKAGE BETWEEN CYPRUS AND THE AEGEAN QUESTION AND HAD NOT MADE PROGRESS ON THE LATTER ISSUE A PRECONDITION FOR MOVEMENT TOWARDS A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. AS WE SAW IT, ECEVIT HAD SIMPLY MADE THE POINT THAT THE STATUS OF BOTH ISSUES NECESSARILY DEPENDED TO A CERTAIN EXTENT ON THE GENERAL STATE OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, AND THAT PROGRESS ON THE ONE, INsofar AS IT BETTERED THE ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE OTHER.

4. NIMETZ SAID THAT WE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THE GOC MIGHT NOT BE OVERLY ENTHUSIASTIC IN ITS PUBLIC REACTION TO

ECEVIT'S RECENT STATEMENTS ON CYPRUS AND THE OUTCOME OF THE ECEVIT-WALDHEIM MEETING. NEVERTHELESS, WE FELT THAT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IF THE GREEK CYPRIOTS WERE TO ADOPT A POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY THAT HAD BEEN PRESENTED FOR FORWARD MOVEMENT. IF IN FACT THE TURKS DO PRODUCE CONCRETE PROPOSALS AND ARE READY TO NEGOTIATE, THEN THE GOC'S DESIDERATA FOR A RESUMPTION OF TALKS WILL

HAVE BEEN FULFILLED. NIMETZ URGED THAT THE GOC NOT TAKE THE POSITION THAT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE OTHER SIDE ARE EITHER TO BE ACCEPTED OR REJECTED AS THEY STAND; RATHER THESE SHOULD BE VIEWED AS THE OPENING MOVES IN A PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 010610

5. DIMITRIOU RESPONDED THAT HE TOO HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY ECEVIT'S STATEMENTS, WHICH SOUNDED ALMOST TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE. TIME WOULD TELL, HOWEVER, WHETHER THEY WOULD BE BORNE OUT IN PRACTICE. DIMITRIOU ASSURED NIMETZ THAT THE GOC DID NOT INSIST THAT PROPOSALS PUT FORWARD BY THE TURKISH SIDE BE FULLY TO GREEK CYPRIOT LIKING; ALL THAT WAS WANTED WERE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS THAT COULD SERVE AS A BASIS FOR GENUINE NEGOTIATION. DIMITRIOU UNDERTOOK TO TELEPHONE FOREIGN MINISTER CHRISTOPHIDES TO RELAY TO HIM THE VIEWS THAT NIMETZ HAD CONVEYED.

6. DIMITRIOU THEN INQUIRED AS TO THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE MISSING PERSONS NEGOTIATION. NIMETZ REPLIED THAT THE PARTIES WERE IN OUR VIEW VERY CLOSE TO AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH CERTAIN ISSUES YET REMAINED TO BE CLARIFIED. IN VIEW OF THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN ANKARA AND ECEVIT'S PROBABLE DESIRE TO REVIEW THE QUESTION FOR HIMSELF, OUR INCLINATION FOR THE MOMENT WAS TO HOLD BACK RATHER THAN TO CONTINUE TO PRESS BOTH SIDES. OUR GENERAL FEELING WAS THAT IT ULTIMATELY DEPENDED ON THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WHETHER AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED; IT WAS NOT FITTING OR DESIRABLE FOR US TO PUSH THEM INTO SOMETHING AGAINST THEIR WILL. NIMETZ EMPHASIZED TO DIMITRIOU THAT WE VIEWED MISSING PERSONS IN A STRICTLY HUMANITARIAN RATHER THAN POLITICAL CONTEXT; AND ANY ARRANGEMENTS AGREED UPON FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONING OF A MISSING PERSONS COMMITTEE SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS PRECEDENTS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON A SETTLEMENT.

7. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION OF THE PROSPECTS FACING THE NEW ECEVIT GOVERNMENT, DIMITRIOU NOTED THAT SUPPORT TO TURKISH CYPRUS WAS A SIGNIFICANT DRAIN ON TURKEY'S FINANCES, AND HE SUGGESTED THAT ECONOMIC RELIEF COULD BE UTILIZED BY THE U.S. AND WESTERN EUROPE AS AN INDUCEMENT TO THE GOT
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PAGE 05 STATE 010610

TO MOVE ON THE CYPRUS ISSUES. NIMETZ SAID THAT THERE WERE CERTAINLY ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR THE GOT TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS, INCLUDING CYPRUS; BUT HE STRESSED THAT THE U.S. WOULD NOT SEEK TO MAKE USE OF TURKEY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AS A LEVER TO FORCE CONCESSIONS ON THE OTHER ISSUES.

8. AS A FURTHER SIDELIGHT, DIMITRIOU MENTIONED A REPORT IN THE CYPRIOT PRESS TO EFFECT THAT THE U.S. HAD WANTED TO HAVE OBSERVER PRESENT AT WALDHEIM'S MEETINGS IN CYPRUS, BUT

HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN. NIMETZ SAID THAT THIS STORY WAS COMPLETELY WRONG, AND HYPOTHESIZED THAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A MISREPRESENTATION OF MEZVINSKY'S POSSIBLE TRIP TO CYPRUS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MISSING PERSONS ISSUE. CHRISTOPHER

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